

[Translation]

Teller Machines in Banks

4510. SHRI JAI PRAKASH AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the bank branches in Delhi, location-wise where Automatic Teller Machines have since been installed;

(b) the details of the bank branches where the said machines are proposed to be installed in the near future; and

(c) the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

[English]

Free Foreign Investment Under WTO

4511. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the developing countries are under pressure to endorse the inclusion of an European Commissions proposal in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) which may take away their freedom to regulate foreign investments; and

(b) if so, India's reaction to the proposal to set up a new investment regime, called Multilateral Investment Agreement (MIA), under the umbrella of WTO?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b). European Commission has supported Canada's proposal that the WTO constitute a Working Party to discuss issues on investment policy. India, along with some other countries, has advocated that:

- the Agreement on TRIMS already has a time frame of considering the discussion on this issue, which should be adhered to; and
- the issue should first be fully analysed and discussed in UNCTAD before a decision is taken whether it needs to be taken on to the agenda of the WTO.

Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights

4512. SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether India's bio-diversity is being patented by private companies;

(b) whether the Government propose to take steps to patent the entire plant and animal bio-diversity under the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have prepared an inventory of the country's total plant and animal species, including lower forms of life; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (c). Plants and animals are not patentable under the Patents Act, 1970. The Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) also permits members to exclude plants and animals from patentability.

(d) and (e). The Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and the Zoological Survey of India (ZSI) are responsible for the survey and inventorisation of the plants and animals species of the country, respectively, including lower forms of life. Approximately, 70% of the geographical area of the country has been surveyed so far by these organisations. Based on these surveys, 45,000 plant species and 81,000 animal species have been recorded.

Functioning of DGS & D

4513. SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of gazetted/non-gazetted Secretariat officers posted in the Department of Supply;

(b) the details of their role in the functioning of DGS & D;

(c) the achievements made by them to strengthen the functioning of DGS & D;

(d) whether the Government propose to set up Supply Board by disbanding the Department of Supply; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) The number of gazetted and non-gazetted officers posted in Department of Supply is indicated below:

Gazetted : 34

Non-gazetted : 146

(b) and (c). The Department of Supply is the nodal department for the purchase and inspection of stores for Central Government Departments and also for State Governments, PSUs, etc., for which DGS & D finalises Rate Contracts. All Rate Contracts of turnover of above Rs. 5 Crores are finalised with the approval of the Department of Supply. Related functions like timely payment, shipment and clearance of stores are also looked after by the Department. It is also concerned with ensuring timely testing and evaluation of materials, products and equipment and it is increasingly associated with the quality improvement/control measures. It also manages Cadre of 2 Group 'A' Services, viz., Indian Supply Service and Indian Inspection Services. It also administers scientific officers and other staff required for the chain of National Test Houses. The Department of Supply have been carrying out its functions effectively through the attached offices of DGS & D, Office of Chief Controller of Accounts and National Test House. The officers and staff of the Department are engaged in the above functions.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Dues Against NTC

4514. SHRI SUSHIL CHANDRA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether payment of rupees 21 crore is to be made by the National Textiles Corporation to Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board; and

(b) if so, the time by which the said payment is likely to be made?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA):
(a) As on 31.7.96, an amount of Rs. 19.51 crores is payable by NTC (M.P.) Ltd. to Madhya Pradesh Electricity Board.

(b) Due to acute shortage of working capital and the losses suffered by NTC, the NTC has not been able to pay these dues. Government have approved a Revised Turn Around Plan for NTC including the mills under NTC (M.P.) Ltd. The Revised Turn Around Plan has been placed before the BIFR for its approval. The implementation of the plan is expected to make NTC mills viable. NTC is expected to be able to clear these dues on implementation of the Revised Turn Around Plan.

[English]

Development of Handicrafts in U.P.

4515. SHRI S.P. JAISWAL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Uttar Pradesh Handicrafts Development Corporation has sought assistance for implementation of schemes for development of handicrafts like woodcraft, items made of copper and brass, hand dying, carpet and saree weaving and pottery in the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI R.L. JALAPPA):
(a) to (c). The Uttar Pradesh Export corporation, Kanpur (the nodal organisation for the development of handicrafts in the State) has sought assistance in various crafts for implementation in the state for development of handicrafts. The details of assistance provided by the Government to the corporation during 1995-96 and 1996-97 is as under:-

(Rs. in lakhs)

S.No.	Name of the scheme	Amount Released	
		1995-96	1996-97 upto Aug. 96
1.	Exhibition	8.68	1.80
2.	Renovation of emporia	2.50	1.79
3.	Setting up of Craft Development Centre.	1.88	1.94
4.	Setting up of carpet training and common facility centre.	-	25.00
5.	Design Development	-	3.00
6.	Training in various crafts.	-	2.46

Opening of R.R.Bs

4516. SHRI KESHAB MAHANTA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the locations of the Regional Rural Banks, State-wise with particular reference to Assam;

(b) whether the Union Government have received some proposals for setting up of the branches of Regional Rural Banks in the States; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time by which these